

ATTACHMENT D

My name is Murrel Dawson, I live in Benton City, Washington. I have lived in the Tri-City area since 1961. I am against opening ALE or any part of The Hanford Reach National Monument to elk or deer hunting.

After reading WHAT SHOULD HAPPEN TO RATTLESNAKE HILLS ELK? in the Tri-City Herald, issue 8/25/04, page A13 with suggestions by Mr. Hamilton I find my concerns are well founded. One of Mr. Hamilton's suggested solutions was for landowners to be included in the elk management process. In exchange they would cooperate with the state in identifying areas of their property where they could create elk-friendly habitat to lure the herd off the Monument and the dangerous roads. My question is this...would these elk-friendly areas then be turned into exclusive hunting reserves for those that can afford a membership. My suggestion would be for the State to purchase these areas of concern, allow the farmer to farm that land and reap whatever profit they can from it while allowing the herd to graze undisturbed when weather conditions force them off the Monument.

Another suggestion presented by Mr. Hamilton was to haze the animals off the Monument where hunters could be waiting. I can't believe that a true hunter would like to admit to his friends while talking about his trophy head that a helicopter chased the animal out in the open where he could kill it!

These two suggestions make me think that some adjacent landowners are more concerned with making a dollar from the elk than they are in protecting their land from elk damage.

One of the main concerns I have - will ORV be allowed and will they be required to stay on existing roads? Will there be personnel on site to enforce this requirement? Once a path has been cut by a vehicle the damage is done and will remain for years. Noxious weed seed would be spread from the vehicles that in turn pose a further problem for the ongoing habitat restoration of the Monument.

Will hunters be allowed to camp over night or will they be limited to daylight hours? If camping is allowed, will the campsites be cleaned up after they leave and who will pay for the cleanup?

If the reason for the hunt is "to thin the herd" will only cow permits be issued? Allowing bulls to be killed will not thin the herd. I have a concern that few hunters will shoot a cow elk if there is even a slight possibility of bagging one of the trophy set of antlers. I doubt a cow's head to hang on the wall is what they will be after!

These are just a few of my concerns as to what might happen to the Hanford Reach National Monument's animals and habitat that we have all worked so long and so hard to acquire and protect. This treasure belongs to all of us, not just a few people. If managed correctly it will be here for ages

to come where everyone, no matter where they live, can come and enjoy what is here. The Fish and Wildlife people were given the job of management. Let us hope that the local personnel can stand up to the pressures from outside and keep The Hanford Reach National Monument, of which ALE is a part, safe for all to enjoy.

Murrel V. Dawson
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